Foreign Trade of Czechoslovakia

Since the 1948 coup, the foreign trade of Czechoslovakia
has doubled in value and has undergone changes beneficial to
the Bloc and in particular the USSR. Whereas in 1948 the Bloc
accounted for 32% of total trade, today it is responsible for
about 65% of Czech trade. The USSR is the chief trading partner,
usually accounting for one-third of the turnover. The share of
trade with western nations declined after 1948 and reached a
low of 22% in 1953 but has recovered in the past three years
largely as a result of increased trade with underdeveloped Free
World countries. Under Communist control increasing emphasis has
been placed on the development of heavy industry which has created
a growing capability for exporting machinery and equipment. By
1956 this category represented 40% of Czech exports. Czech
writers themselves characterize their country as having been
made into a machine shop for the Bloc.

The most significant recent developments in the trade field
are the Czech interests in expanding their western trade and in
promoting specialization among Bloc countries. Czech economists
argue that expanding trade with the west will enable Czechoslova-
kia to be the first Bloc country to match western standards of
living. Also, they have been arguing at intra-Bloc conferences that
existing inefficiencies and duplication of effort must be eliminated
if the Bloc as a whole is to enjoy the fruits of division of labor
in foreign trade.

Foreign Trade of Czechoslovakia

	1950	1954	1955	1956	1957
Imports (million $)	620	933	1052	1185	1385
Major Bloc Partners in %					
USSR				33	38
China				6	5
Poland				5	4
SZG				10	10
Hungary				6	5
Exports (million $)	733	1005	1177	1387	1356
Major Bloc Partners in %					
USSR				31	29
China				5	6
Poland				7	6
SZG				10	10
Hungary				4	6
Turnover (million $)	1353	1938	2229	2572	2741
Bloc in %	55	75	70	67	*65
(major partners:					
USSR	28	55	34	33	33
China	1	10	8	6	5
Poland	10	8	8	7	5
SZG	4	7	7	10	10
Hungary	4	7	6	6	6
West in %	45	25	30	33	*35
(Underdeveloped areas)		10	14	14	*15

*Preliminary